

Agenda Item 9 – Space and Sustainable Development
Statement by Kevin Conole

June 21, 2024

Chair, the United States appreciates the opportunity to highlight the fundamental relationship between student engagement and sustainable development, and is leading efforts to inspire interest in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (or “STEM”). In addition to its unique space missions, research, and innovations, NASA has made a long-term commitment to building an inclusive open science community over the next decade. Open-source science is a commitment to the open sharing of software, data, and knowledge as early as possible in the scientific process.

Chair, in April 2024, NASA was pleased to release the “NASA Space Sustainability Strategy: Volume One,” which is a significant milestone in the United States’ ongoing efforts to ensure the responsible and sustainable use of space for future generations. This strategy, which uses the UNCOPUOS definition for “sustainability,” will focus on advancing NASA's responsibilities in space sustainability across four domains: Earth, Earth's orbit, cislunar space, and deep space.

Chair, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, anchored by the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and associated targets and indicators, provides a universal framework for all countries and stakeholders to use as a blueprint for progress on economic, social and environmental sustainability. NASA contributes to the SDGs across all its mission directorates and is proud to be providing hundreds of examples to the new UN Office for Outer

Space Affairs Space Solutions Compendium. This compendium will be a helpful tool that people can use to identify space-based solutions to the SDGs.

Chair, space science and technology applications are essential to addressing current and future challenges and realizing the SDGs. It is only through continued and purposeful international collaboration that we can leverage our shared strengths to fully realize the potential impact Earth observations can have in our work. The U.S. Department of State's "Strategic Framework for Space Diplomacy," explicitly notes the importance of sharing government Earth observation data internationally to support "disaster management, climate change mitigation and adaptation, and economic development."

To further advocate and realize these contributions, the United States works with established international forums such as the Group on Earth Observations (GEO) which launched a dedicated Initiative, Earth Observations for the Sustainable Development Goals (EO4SDG). The United States, through NASA, NOAA, and the United States Geological Survey (USGS) employs Earth observations in smart practices and solutions on the use of this data in planning, tracking, and reporting. This includes GEONETCast Americas, a user-driven, user-friendly and low-cost information dissemination service providing global information as a basis for sound decision-making in a number of critical areas such as biodiversity and ecosystem sustainability, disaster resilience, food security and sustainable agriculture, and sustainable urban development among others. There are currently over 100 GEONETCast -Americas antenna stations throughout the Western Hemisphere.

The United States' work for this goal is further enhanced by the Committee on Earth Observation Satellites (CEOS), which has developed Earth observation 'Support Sheets' for four SDG indicators, to help countries utilize EO data for reporting to the SDG Framework. NOAA is providing leadership for SDG Indicator 14.1.1a on coastal eutrophication and marine pollution.

Chair, NOAA was proud to host The Coordination Group for Meteorological Satellites (CGMS) plenary in Washington DC earlier this month. This group globally coordinates meteorological satellite systems and covers protection of orbital assets, contingency planning, data quality and accessibility and development of key satellite products for users worldwide.

The United States believes that a successful sustainable development agenda will require effective partnerships, such as these, for implementation.

Chair, diversity is our strength, and we must continue our collective work to empower women and girls everywhere, and to create a space workforce that is more inclusive of the full range of human talent and potential. Our delegation was honored to attend and play a part in the development of the Gender Mainstreaming Toolkit at the UNOOSA Space4Women Expert Meeting hosted in Canada last fall. We are grateful to the UN Office for Outer Space Affairs and the Government of Canada for hosting this event and drafting the Toolkit. We warmly welcome your achievements, the work of UNOOSA Space4Women, and the Toolkit.

Thank you, Chair.